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strong feeling that a man who has acquired two wives or all the issue of his gawel's first wife should allow his younger brother to have his share of the women from the gawel and mokul. The older brother, however, has the first right to them, and his gawel will ask his permission before giving the third daughter to the younger man. He will say: "It is better that your yukiyuko have this woman, for you have two already, and he has none. It is better that I have more waku to help me." Unless the older brother is an extraordinarily selfish person, he immediately replies, "Yes, you tell him to feed her" (give her to him for a wife); and he helps his younger brother procure the presents he must give gawel and mokul for this wife.

Mutual help prevails between wawa and yukiyuko in giving frequent presents to gawel and mokul. When wawa is making presents for his first wives, yukiyuko gives him spears, game from the hunt, and whatever wawa might like to present to his parents-in-law. When yukiyuko's turn comes, wawa is equally helpful. There is no obligation on yukiyuko to make presents to wawa for the latter's right to the galle that are to come to the former. Rather, wawa frequently asks gawel to give his other daughters to yukiyuko and makes presents to gawel for this purpose. Several motives guide him in this procedure. The first is brotherly affection and family pride. Own brothers through one father and one mother or father's brothers and mother's sisters are one's best friends, and most like one socially. Then there is frequently the fear that yukiyuko will fornicate with wawa's wives. This is no uncommon thing; the jungle and Australian bush offer ample opportunities for secret meetings. An old man usually suffers this indignity in silence, since he knows that his senility forces his wives to go to other men for sexual satisfaction and that his younger brothers who will inherit them are the proper ones for them. If the older brother has this situation too forcibly thrust upon him by camp gossip, he must attempt to discipline the younger man by scolding him—but "he doesn't talk very hard." Among younger men this would cause considerable trouble and would not happen very often except among tribal brothers, the whole pressure of society being against the younger man: all the relatives in his male line and those of the clan would defend the rights of the older man and condemn the younger. Finally, an older brother always helps a younger brother to acquire a wife because it settles the younger man and tends to prevent his getting into trouble with more remote wawas, yukiyukos, and other kin, by

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tribal law, the waku of gawel and the gurrong of mokul would have been the same person; with the wrong marriage a discord is created in the first ascending generation, and sometimes considerable time elapses before a woman is taken in marriage.

After marriage a young man usually lives for a short period of varying length with his parents-in-law. After this he may go to his own people and take his wife with him. There is often much protest by the wife when she leaves her parents, but they aid her husband. When a child is born, its parents, if not already with the wife's parents, return there so the grandparents can see the baby. This is only for the first child, although the parents of both the husband and wife are always pleased and anxious to see all the grandchildren.

When a girl leaves her parents for the first time, a younger brother accompanies her (see page 65), a custom called "olokork." (The sister's husband is also dué to her young brother, just as this younger brother is galle to his sister's dué.) The husband looks out for the younger man and assumes the place of a father to him during his residence there.

When a child is born the new union is greatly solidified; it now has become a fully developed family, and except for the wife's being stolen by another man there would be little chance of permanent rupture even if she ran away. Tribal sentiment would be against her and her paramour or anyone who might have stolen her. The children would seldom go with her in such a case, and the strong attachment a Murngin mother has for her offspring would force her to come back to them. The writer has recorded several instances of a woman's going through the most difficult privations and risking probable death to return to her children after she had been stolen by a man from another tribe.

If a camp has been ambushed and the men all killed in a general tribal war, the women and children are taken by the conquerors and given as wives to the men who are in the right relationship to them.

A man wants as many wives as he can get and still keep his peace with the other males of his clan. The average is about three and a half for middle-aged men; but there is a recorded case of one native with seventeen wives, the majority having been obtained by stealing them or killing their husbands. He also married "wrong." There is a close correlation of having many wives with fighting strength, or with being the son of a man powerful in war who had thereby acquired a large number of women whose brothers would be gawels to

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595 the son. A dué likes many wives because he tires of cohabiting with
554 one and because such multiplicity creates more sons and daughters, so that he will have more waku, dué, and galle, with stronger bonds between him and them.

513 When in camp a woman sleeps with her back to her husband. If
833 intercourse takes place it is in this position so that no one can be aware of what they are doing.

843 A dué and galle never copulate during a woman's pregnancy, lest the child be born dead or die early in infancy, the mother's milk being
834 soured by her husband's semen. If a child is born dead the parents are blamed. If a baby dies, the brother and father of the mother criticize
● 620 their actions throughout the camp in loud voices for her and other members of the tribe to hear. Since sexual intercourse has usually occurred between dué and galle after what they feel should have been the regulated time, they say nothing and do not resent the criticism.

846 After a child is born the woman and man wait several days before resuming sexual relations. The wife goes through a short ceremony that is both therapeutic and ritualistic. She enters the bush with a female relative such as momo, mari, or mokul bapa, and places some stones on a fire. When these are hot she squats over the fire and the other woman throws water over the stones. The steam is supposed to heal, cleanse and close her uterus and make it small again.

846 A woman during this period sleeps facing her husband, who does not try to touch her but waits until she turns from him and starts
833 making casual conversation. He realizes then that she wants him. After his first intercourse with his wife following the birth of a child, the husband always rises early and bathes himself. If he did not, he would look like an animal to the other men and feel ashamed before them.[11]

593 A woman gathers the small game, nuts, bulbs, yams, and other
222 vegetable food, as well as all shell food for the family. A man always has first right to the food brought by her. She and her daughters have
462 eaten all they wish while gathering it. A wife usually cooks the food
262 she has brought for her husband. A large part of a family's larder is contributed by the wife. Big game is supplied by the men, who also bring in fish and large sea animals such as turtle, porpoise, dugong and shark.

[11] There is considerable evidence that there is a comparatively strong taboo on sexual relations between man and wife after the man has seen a totem the first time. It is said that the ceremonial leader for the totem would be so angry that he would attempt to spear the culprit.

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578 837 "Let us go back and fight him," he said. The two took their spears and went. "Why do you keep on saying I try to lie with your wife? I didn't." Narnarngo called Bengaliwe "deindumeiu" (big testicles). Bengaliwe replied by calling Narnarngo "gollichirtommeru" (big kidneyed). Both terms designate a man who would break all laws of sexual behavior.

When Benaitjimaloi heard the quarrel he came over with his four brothers and stood back of Narnarngo to help him. He is true galle to Narnarngo. Other near male relatives joined each side and a new camp brawl was in progress. No one was killed or very much hurt in the fight that followed. It was later ascertained that a small boy, unaware of the string's significance, had taken it out of Bengaliwe's and placed it in Djowa's wife's basket.

837 43 Sometimes a woman attempts to seduce a young man into joining her for a lovers' assignation. She usually starts by sending him food. After these presents have been given for a while and he is sure of their meaning, he usually tells the woman who brings them for her friend to tell the other woman where he will meet her. If they have an assignation, he usually makes presents to her. Sometimes young men are so bashful that it takes much persuasion to force them into such a union.

583 837 626 628 A runaway marriage differs from a union caused by a man's stealing a woman in that the woman gives her consent; such an arrangement has the consent of neither her people nor his; whereas in the case of theft, a man's own people frequently support him, particularly if there has been hard feeling between the two clans and a conscious rivalry for the women of certain groups. The runaway union usually ends in his and her people attempting to send her back to her true dué, because it would lead to armed trouble between the man's people and the members of the right dué's clan, and also for the woman's people if they did not condemn the act by helping the true dué regain his wife. However, no man's clan would desert him in such a situation to the point of allowing him to be killed or attacked by the injured man's group. Ordinarily, such a situation ends in a "growling" match, in which the two sides stand armed behind the two opponents, the lover allowing the injured husband to have the better of the cursing. Sometimes such a runaway marriage leads to permanent union.

583 837 After a couple have been lovers for some time they may be so fond of each other as to risk everything and leave their own kin and go to a distant clan. Her people, the husband's gawel and galle, immediately help the injured spouse to regain his wife. The people of their groups

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waku and his clan; (2) the strength of the far-off waku's clan; (3) the near waku's having a number of wives and no younger brothers; and (4) the possibility that the waku may want to go without wives. There are two cases of this last on record. The old men usually try to get a man to marry and marry properly. Not only is their personal pressure felt by a man who does not wish to marry, but the whole impact of society is placed against him in hundreds of direct and indirect ways. It would be a strong man with an intense dislike of women who could retain his bachelorhood against such odds.[12]

The reader may assume from this account of illegal unions that marriage is a very unstable institution. Such is not the case. Although love affairs are common, a lifelong marriage either of a galle mielk to one dué, or to him and his younger brothers through the levirate, is the normal thing. Murngin society could not exist were this not true.

From the cases of unfaithfulness and the mechanical manner of acquiring spouses through the relationship of the parents, conjugal love might appear impossible. Although rare, it does exist. The ideal wife and husband are those who remain faithful to their spouses; on the other hand, a promiscuous woman or man is disapproved of even though not openly condemned.

To illustrate a man's affection for his wife: Mun-yir-yir had had a magically powerful totemic string given him to keep preparatory to its being placed upon another's totemic emblem. No woman may see or even hear of such a thing. His galle was burning bush for bandicoots. The fire burned and destroyed the string. All his clansmen and those of the man to whom the string belonged were extremely angry. Women had been killed before for such an offense. An old man said

[12] Occasionally one hears accounts of a number of unmarried men collecting in a group of five or six, going out into the jungle with one woman and having group sexual relation with her. One woman I knew of had done this several times; the people severely disapproved of her. She seemed a woman of insatiable sexual appetite and was continually in trouble because of it. She also seemed to stimulate all the men sexually and had a greater interest for them than some of the other women who might have been obtained. Sometimes a youth who is having an affair with an older woman will tell his friends and have them accompany him to his assignation. The other men remain back when they arrive. According to one of the accounts given me, the woman says, "Who is with you?" He replies, "My friends." She says, "Do not bring your friends, I only like you, I only want to have you." The boy says, "No, they are my friends. I'll have you first, then they can." She objects, and he says, "But I feel very sorry for them. Maybe if you don't play with them they will come use black magic on you." He keeps on talking like that and the woman listens and agrees to his proposal. There seems to be considerable evidence that what is called nymphomania among modern women also exists among these aboriginal peoples.

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of them." This demonstrates clearly the strong bond between these relatives. Sometimes a waku's gawel is not galle to the waku's father except distantly. Obviously, given the above feelings, the gawel-waku relationship adds much to the strength of a clan and at the same time helps prevent trouble between the two groups.

If a fight developed, gawel would help waku with the loan of his spears, and, if necessary, by fighting for him. His own sons would also aid his waku, their duć. A waku is taught much of what he knows about fighting and hunting by gawel. If the older man is a magician he also teaches this art to his waku.

Gawel uses waku's property, or vice versa, with the freedom of a brother or father. If gawel's wife is misbehaving, waku tries by indirect threats of death to make her conform to the tribal ideal of conduct.

Sometimes a gawel promises a waku his daughter, the boy makes presents to him for a long period of time, and the gawel then refuses to give him the girl. This means trouble. Strong pressure would usually be put upon the older man to force him to give her to the boy. This might end in an interclan fight, or the waku would probably run away with her.

Another disappointing situation for waku that occasionally occurs is when a gawel says, "I'll give you the daughters from this wife." The waku makes presents over a period of time, meanwhile watching the woman to see if she is going to bear children. If she is barren or produces only sons he stops making his father-in-law presents and turns his attention to some other gawel.

The Australian aborigine is a most industrious trader. Articles of trade are passed over well-known trade routes for hundreds of miles and through many tribes. The Murngin and their neighbors are no exceptions to this rule. The Ritarngo and the Djinba trade stone spear heads to the seacoast tribes for red ocher and pipe clay, or for wooden spears. Ranga string is exchanged between them, as well as many other articles. The waku-gawel reciprocal is utilized for the trading. All men try to have as many distant waku as they can. Presents are constantly being exchanged between the two, not to acquire material wealth so much as to extend a man's sphere of influence beyond the nearby clans. It pleases a Murngin to have a present sent from a distant people and adds greatly to his social prestige. It also gives him a greater feeling of safety when traveling, to know that he has a waku or gawel with whom he has this trading relationship. Waku and gawel often visit each other and their behavior demonstrates real friendship when they meet.

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604 855 When a mother goes away with the father for a trip to distant kinspeople, the older children are left with the mother's sisters, the mother's mother, or the mother's brother. The children turn to the near mothers for food and care with the same feeling as to their own mother.

593 628 A mother is deeply fond of her children. Maritcha saved the life of a young man about fifteen years old when some of the former's clansmen plotted the boy's death. The mother heard of this. Maritcha's clan and her own had had a feud for many years, yet from gratitude she attempted to help Maritcha and stop her own people from fighting him at a later time.

841 When a girl has her first menses the mother helps paint her and take care of her.

861 626 593 There is constant tribal pressure on a mother to be good to her children. No Murngin mother would dare correct her children in the manner of a European woman, for she would be considered cruel and inhuman. Camp gossip and opinion would uniformly condemn her and liken her to an animal. On the other hand, there is less restraint on a son and daughter concerning their mother than in our own society. They frequently curse her, and there is no taboo on the conversation used before her.

604 606 Little arndi (son's wife) occupies a different place in the kinship system, although the general behavior toward her would be the same as toward the true mother (see page 72). Waku in this case would also be a different person. He would be father's sister's husband or husband's father to small arndi.

If a small arndi's husband runs away she goes back to her mokul bapa (husband's mother) until he returns or until she has been given to a younger brother of the husband.

603 *Nati* ⟷ *Kaminyer* (diramo and mielk) (mother's father ⟷ daughter's child)

There are two types of this relationship since there are a female and a male kaminyer and only a male nati. There are five varieties of nati: (1) gawel's and arndi's true father; (2) brothers of this nati; (3) brothers of mono married to marikmo; (4) near nati; and (5) distant nati.

603 835 Nati always feeds his male kaminyer, but not the female because he and she would be afraid people might think he was trying to seduce her. He would also be afraid that she might think so herself. The

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462 food, yams, and other vegetable food. This is generally done communally by the women in the bush where the food is gathered, but women also cook within the camp. Men cook the larger animals, [25] prepare the stone ovens, place the large chunks of meat in the fire, and tend the food to see that it is being properly treated.—It is considered [562] as within the bounds of propriety for the man to move about the camp at night in the way he pleases, but "all women must stay in the house when the men are at home."

851 Definite taboos are removed from a man's diet when he becomes a father (see pages 68 and 69), as from a woman's when she becomes a 262 mother or too old to have children. After the birth of the child, the parents paint themselves. He takes the bones of his first kills from the basket which had been made by his mother and carries them some distance from the camp. Here a hollow log is cut in the same shape as that for the bones of a dead man, and the bones are put inside it. The "coffin" is put up in the camp in the same manner as a dead man's carved hollow-log coffin. The people who have had meat from the boy while he could not eat put presents of food in his clan's symbolic well, made while he was painting himself.—If a man had eaten [626] of the tabooed foods while in the lower age grades, it is supposed he would become weak and unable to throw a spear in a spear fight; in a makarata it is likely that a spear will go into his leg, it will swell up and his flesh grow rotten while the spear is in his leg. This will also happen if the bones of the animals killed are not put in a hollow log and treated properly. If a young childless man ate porcupine, he would not grow up because "porcupine is a short one."

851 The reason given for the release from the taboos (see also page 69) is that the young man "becomes more quiet then and does not run about everywhere after other women. He stays in one place and looks out for his own galle and children." In reality, his social personality has grown so that his actual relatives include descending relatives as well as ascending. The birth of a child heightens his emotional ties with his relatives who have children who will marry his children and, in all, puts him in a different status, which is expressed by the release of the food taboos. All this underlying thought agrees with the Murngin idea that marriage does not become complete and permanent until a child is born.

561 Age grading in Murngin societies is highly ritualistic and controls a man's religious life far more than it does his ordinary daily existence. A man's religious knowledge and his understanding of the sacred

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totemic lore, with the associated myths and rituals, are dependent upon how far he has been initiated into the sacred mysteries. The initiations elevate him from a lower and more profane existence to a higher and more sacred plane and mark his transition from one age grade to a higher and older one. Age grading, then, controls the degree of sacred participation a man has within the community.

The older men are the final repositories of all the sacred knowledge which can be obtained only by their willingness to initiate the younger men of the lower ranks into their own group. The older men, therefore, by virtue of the age-grade system, control the younger men fairly effectively. It is partly through the exercise of the sanction of refusing to allow a man to be initiated into certain ceremonies, or threatening to do so, that they can maintain the effectiveness of Murngin gerontocracy. In addition, the old men, felt to be in closer touch with the clan ancestors and totems through their deeper participation in the sacred myths and rituals, effect discipline by invoking the religious sanctions: dire things will happen to men who commit acts the old men frown on and which offend the totemic spirits and ancient ancestors. For example, a man who starts a fight or who commits adultery during a ceremony may be told that his real ancestors and his totemic ancestors will not allow the totemic fish soul to enter his wife, she will be childless—a thing all Murngin men would make every effort to avoid. The offending young man may also be told that the totemic ancestors will not come to direct him to his totemic water hole if he is killed in a fight, or that they will refuse to answer him in a time of need, as when he is in a fight or drowning.

The first effective age grading in the lives of the Murngin occurs when the entire group is sexually bifurcated. The young boy is circumcised and immediately enters the portals of a sacred realm which is forever taboo to his sister, promised wives, and the entire female population of a tribe. The pidgin-English expression found generally among Australian aborigines, "make him a young man," describes what takes place in the minds of the natives: that is, the boy is taken out of the social status of female and put in the social category of male by the use of certain rites of passage. His later initiations take him spiritually further and further from his original profane innocence of the uncircumcised child, where sociologically he is treated as a woman, and they translate him grade by grade into the group's mysteries. The young girl grows into womanhood and continues in the ordinary world with only an outsider's knowledge of the mysteries

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which center in the men's ground and overflow during parts of the rituals into the general camp where her world is centered.

The principle of sex, then, has been used to organize a status group, with the women and small children of either sex in one group and the initiated men in another. The women's group remains ritually undifferentiated in a status sense except for a tendency to give women near or in the menopause preference over younger women in those ceremonies in which women participate. For example, in the Gunabibi the old women beat the ground to stop Muit, and in the Djungguan it is felt to be more appropriate and effective for older women to dance around the warngaitja than for men to do so. This corresponds with the lifting of part of the feeling of taboo around the mother-in-law after she loses many of her secondary sexual characteristics and "gets to be an old woman and looks all the same as a man."

Murngin age grading is largely a religious phenomenon consisting of a series of rites of passage from one age group to another in the life cycle of the individual. It seems, therefore, nearer the truth of Murngin thought to treat the life of the individual as the complete entity it appears to be in the thought of the culture. Each Murngin's beginning is in the sacred totemic well of his ancestors, and each Murngin's end is within the same subterranean depths. His first status is that of the unborn child in the form of a small fish which exists with others of his kind beside the totemic spirits of the clan, the totemic mythological ancestors, the ancient clan dead, and those who have recently died. He is under the control of his ancestors and the totem, and his passage from the world of the unborn to that of the living depends on the good behavior of his parents, particularly of his father. The Murngin think of this from the parents' point of view and conduct their lives more carefully because of the fear of childlessness.

The Murngin baby comes from the totem well through a religious experience of the father, since it is the father who is in touch with the totem world of which the mother is supposed to have no knowledge. The father's mystical dream experience is itself a kind of rite of passage of the unborn and begins the child's socialization. The father's announcement to the mother of the child's arrival (frequently, it must be admitted, after she has reported her pregnancy to the father, who has kept silent, he says, to test the validity of his experience) changes the father's age-grade status. It removes certain ritualistic food taboos and definitely establishes his place in the older men's group. This means, then, that the father-child reciprocal functions as a unit: the

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462 562 561 between the women's restricted social participation in such parts of the culture as ritual and myth and their simple technological behavior. Technological behavior obviously is connected with the age-grading situation in Murngin society. It is impossible to say which causes which—both are part of the male-female social dichotomy. There can be no question, however, but that the general profane participation of the women in the technological and economic life of the people is just as restricted when it comes to participating in the more elaborate and highly skilled technical processes as it is in the ritual of the tribe; and that the men's highly developed participation in Murngin ritual finds its counterpart in their greater participation in economic and technological processes which demand a greater degree of manual dexterity and skill and are far more complex techniques. The most elaborate and only complex technique a woman uses is that of making baskets. All other processes which she uses are comparatively simple, with the possible exception of helping to construct some of the bark houses. The same is true of her economic behavior. The digging of yams, the gathering of shells, of roots, of fruit, are probably the simplest of all the economic processes found in Murngin society. It is with these things she is chiefly engaged. Among men the harpooning of turtles—which includes such elaborate technical background as the making of a canoe, its sailing and proper use, the construction of the harpoon and its use—is probably at the maximum end of Murngin technological complexity. As a boy grows up his participation in the use of these techniques grows, paralleled by his ritual growth.

561 In other words, as he generally extends his social personality further into the group in his daily life; he is, at definite intervals, admitted into a deeper understanding of the religious life. If in no other way, he becomes aware of this by being part of the group which forces the younger men through these same rites. He realizes that he enters many of the ceremonies as a part of his older age group, and that he is becoming part of the Python spirit, as when he gives his blood to the Python's Djungguan rite or when he dances with the sacred blood on him. This identification with the essential holiness or final sacred power necessitates, he realizes, careful conduct and a minute regulation of his daily behavior, for he risks profaning this spirit within himself and resultant sickness or death. The best medicine man among the Murngin told several of his patients that Muit was angry and had made them sick because they failed to see the Gunabibi through to its conclusion—an affront to the Python. The men's group separates

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open to human occupation by the drying of the land, the burning of the spear grass, and the disappearance of the swarms of vicious insects, these smaller groups coalesce into larger units which may contain as many as thirty or forty people and will contain many more if a large ritual is being celebrated. Every member of this group is related closely to at least one or more other individuals in the group, but to the rest he is only tribally related. Where the sea-turtle eggs on the sand beaches are most plentiful, the oyster beds most prolific and accessible, sea-bird eggs most abundant, lily and yam swamps most productive, and the cycad palm nuts ripened and ready for picking, there will be found the horde groups.

All of the people in the horde will be of friendly clans which are usually closely intermarried; if there are antagonisms they are suppressed or given expression in a peace-making makarata, which allows those involved to remain in harmony. As soon as food is plentiful the better areas usually become locations for the great rituals which take place at this time; the ceremonial life definitely enlarges the size of the horde groups. The camp of the horde is organized spatially in the same way as the clan lands are spatially related to each other.

Ritual sanctions at this time help prevent open strife, which is always a possibility whenever the clans come together. The belief that the totem will be offended if clashes occur between opposing clansmen usually keeps the peace. Ritual sanction, then, is the most powerful force in regulating the peaceful behavior of these larger food-gathering hordes. If it were not for these extreme sanctions the larger hordes could not be formed. Peoples with a background of feud and warfare who might not otherwise risk meeting one another can be fairly certain of peace in a horde gathered for a ritual. Since the local clans which start the ceremony have it well under way and the totemic emblems have been made and are in the camp by the time the first guests arrive, hesitant visitors can feel comparatively safe in coming to the ceremony. The bitterly antagonistic clans, however, who have a continuous blood feud tradition and a record of killing back of them would never be present unless under extreme circumstances, for religious sanctions or peace-making duels would not prevent open strife and possible secret killings between them.

The horde, then, is governed by the seasonal fluctuation of plenty or scarcity, and its extreme in size is effected by the attractive stimuli of important ceremonies.

The usual division of labor obtains during the period of the larger

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If armed conflict breaks out in a camp where a ceremony is being celebrated, the ritual is usually stopped, either because the participants are afraid to stay, for they may be killed in their sleep, or because the leaders of the ceremony become angry at what they consider an insult to their totems. 628 796 778

It is believed that while a totemic emblem is in camp all fighting should cease, and any infraction of the tribal law is considered a direct insult to the totemic emblem and therefore to the clan. The leader of a Narra ceremony, at which the totemic emblems are used, almost always stops the ritual if there has been any serious infraction of tribal law, because he does not want to accept the consequences of an affront to his totem. It is believed that the totem itself would seek vengeance upon any leader who did not protect its interests at such a time. The writer saw two Narra, a Djungguan, and two Gunabibi ceremonies terminated because of the outbreak of fighting. The two Narra were stopped by the leaders because they said their totems were insulted, the Djungguan and Gunabibi because of the fighters' fear of death and also because of the anger of the leader of the ceremony. Another Narra ceremony was not stopped when a fight followed the catching of two women in adultery by their husbands. The women were thoroughly beaten—less because of the offense itself than because it took place while a great ceremony was being held—and might have been killed but for their escape in the black of night by swimming to a nearby island. 778 626 578 [684 688]

The deliberate stopping of a ceremony demonstrates that warfare and ceremony have clearly antithetical traits. The great ceremonies tend to enlarge the group solidarity both in numbers and in extent of territory and to create a smoothly functioning unit out of a large number of clans, but warfare destroys this unity and reduces the limits of solidarity to the clan. 628 796 182

Since both traits are necessary to the tribe's social organization, a nice periodical balance has been struck; at one period ceremonialism controls the people's activities, and later war is uppermost in the relations of the local groups.

Effects of Warfare on Population

A fairly accurate estimate places the population of this area around three thousand. The genealogical material gathered by the writer shows about an equal number of women and men, with possibly slightly more men than women. This means that there are about fifteen hun- 162

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765 of the man's personal basket. A piece of a spear that has been broken
628 off and left in the body of the victim is also used as a relic. When a man has been wounded he sometimes soaks pieces of paper bark in his blood and presents them to his relatives to be used as reminders of their duty to compensate him for his injury by helping him kill or wound a member of the offending man's clan. When a man obtains one of the relics, it is an almost absolute demand on him to kill a member of the slayer's group. This is particularly true if it is given to a young man. The older men usually give their relics to the younger males.

765 The spirit of the dead is supposed to go with the relic, and the relic
778 has magic power. It can be thrown into an intended victim's fire and
789 cause him to go to sleep, or the possessor can blow his breath against it and produce the same effect. It is often carried in the mouth during a battle to make an opponent tired and heavy-footed and to prevent him from dodging spears. Relics play a prominent part in all feuds.

682 Occasionally men are killed within the clan, but this is not a cause for war or retaliation by members of the clan or by near relatives from without the clan. A man may be such a notorious killer and cause so much trouble for his own clansmen that the entire group will kill him to stop further disturbances. At times men are slain by their own
688 clan for breaking ceremonial taboos, such as divulging secrets of the old men to the women or the uninitiated, and for viewing ceremonial objects before their initiation.

672 If a fight is on and a near relative is accidentally hit by a club or
576 spear, the person responsible hits himself on the head while saying he is sorry. Here, too, the underlying idea is to inflict an injury on the responsible person similar to the one the injured party suffered.

152 Military honor also contributes its share to the causes for war. A man
517 will brave the spears of a whole clan to demonstrate his fearlessness. The writer has seen two brothers defy fifteen men in a spear fight. The Murngin people are a brave and courageous group. Fear of death
[626] while in a fight is seldom seen. A man who shows an unwillingness to fight is called a woman and held in extreme contempt.

628 The fundamental principle underlying all the causes of Murngin
681 warfare is that of reciprocity: if a harm has been done to an individual
181 or a group, it is felt by the injured people that they must repay the ones who have harmed them by an injury that at least equals the one they have suffered. When the total cultural situation of Murngin life is
181 further examined, this negative reciprocation is found to fit into a

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attitude, since the belief in the curative power of this ritual unifies the point of view of all the members. The magician, while healing, is usually watched by a number of the near and far kinsmen. They all express great satisfaction in his removal of the sickness (the foreign object) and an affirmation of the victim's cure, as do the magician and the victim.

An Examination of the Social Configuration of Magic in the South

The Part Ritual Plays as a "Magical" Instrument in the South.— Ritual can cause sickness and death as well as prevent them. When the great ceremonies such as Gunabibi, Djungguan, Ulmark and Narras are being performed, any breaking of the tribal laws is considered exceedingly dangerous and likely to cause sickness among the totemic group. If totems are hidden within the men's camp and a fight is started, or if illegal sexual relations occur, or if in some way the clan feels its totems have been profanely treated, there is general indignation and a certain amount of fear that members will become ill.

A Narra ceremony was being celebrated by some clans of the Yiritja moiety and during the preliminary part a totem was being made when a fight broke out in the camp among some of the male members because a husband believed that his wife had been having illicit relations with another man. The owners of the totem felt not only that they and their totem had been insulted but also that they were likely to become ill from the fighting and the breaking of the tribal laws.

A shark totem was hidden by a member of the Djirin clan in a hollow tree on the edge of the men's ceremonial grounds. Some women from a distant group passed near it. The owner of the totem followed their tracks and accused their husbands of not watching their women carefully. While he stood with his clansmen back of him, all of them holding their spears in readiness for fighting, he said that it was an insult not only to him and his clan but also to his totemic emblem; that it meant sickness for him or that he might be speared in the next fight he got into.

Two men were caught in illicit sexual relations with two women not their wives while several totemic emblems were on the Narra ground. The Liagaomir clan had their great fire ranga ready for the Narra ceremony. When the leader of this clan heard what had happened he expressed great indignation. He said, "Let us take them down there to our Narra ground, those men and those women, and let us show them our ranga and then kill them. Let them see first what they have done." The women were severely beaten by everybody including their brothers and sisters. The

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753 796 626 834

leader felt that all the clan had been endangered by this profaneness and that they might all become ill.

753 786 626

At other times the lack of participation in sexual intercourse will cause sickness to the man who fails and possibly to others in a group. Sometimes young and bashful men refuse to enter into the ritualistic sexual intercourse which ends the Gunabibi. It is believed that they will be sick. In his account of his first participation in the Gunabibi old Dorng said the following about his embarrassment: "My brother [distant] said to me at this time, 'You go play with my wife.' I said, 'No.' He said, 'You will be sick and maybe die if you don't play with her.'" Often the women who are to be the sexual partners of young men send word to the men that they must come and stay with them or that the young man's refusal will cause both partners to be ill.

753 626

Sometimes improper participation in a ceremony will also cause illness. Willidjungo, the medicine man, diagnosed my lame leg as caused by my not seeing all of a certain Gunabibi ceremony, which had caused the great snake to be sorry and angry with me. This diagnosis occurred in similar cases with several of the natives.

Mistreatment of ceremonial objects connected with the celebration of a great ritual can also cause illnesses. During the Gunabibi some of the feather headpieces of the leader, Ilkara, disappeared and from the indications left it appeared that a wildcat had eaten them. The young men supposed to guard these things and remain on the ceremonial ground during the night had failed in their duty. Ilkara became ill and had to have a doctor remove a large bone from his side which appeared because of this neglect of his totemic paraphernalia.

826 626

Baldness is a term of reproach among the Murngin. A man who becomes bald considers it a calamity. One man among the group was partially bald. His people believed that his condition was due to his making too many totemic emblems and giving them to other men in return for presents; in other words, he was mistreating his totem. There was no evidence that he traded his totemic emblems any more frequently than did any of the other men of the group.

753 826 784

Women sometimes suffer innocently from the power of the ceremonial blood smeared on the men during the Djungguan and Gunabibi ceremonies. Dundir's leg had two small infections about the size of a thumb nail. Her husband said that she could not go hunting for grubs because she was ill. "She picked cotton off me over at Rabuma when

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that time is represented on the bark tray. The boy is given a piece of kangaroo meat or some other food and an old man says, "That is not kangaroo. You tell me the name of that which you're eating. What is it?" 852 869

An old man sits beside the youth and whispers a totemic name of the animal into the ear of the boy. The boy then calls out this esoteric name as he swallows the food. As he says the totemic name all the men cry out, "Yai!!! yai!!!" The whole list of foods is gone through, the boy eating them and being told the taboo name of each. Even though the food is not represented on the bark tray, its name is told him and another pellet takes the place of the missing edible. During the ritual the little boys are informed that if they impart any of the information they have been given, "something will happen to their mothers," and that the old men will spear them if they inform any of the women or children. They are told that the old men will know by magic if they betray their secrets. All the men insist that a boy would be killed if he gave away the secrets of the men.—When the ritual is finished, the fire and logs are covered with sand and earth, and men and boys return to the main camp. 852 869 626

The newly circumcised boys are kept away from all women and remain with the men until the wound is healed and they can walk and urinate without pain or effort. Then the pubic coverings they have been wearing, the ones in which the women saw them before circumcision, are taken off; a short song is played over them and they are burned, others being placed on the boys to symbolize the change in biological and social status. The boys are watched over most carefully by the men during the entire ceremony, as well as during a period after the circumcision. Some older man is always with them. This attention is given both to keep them away from the women and because it is felt that during a circumcision initiation a boy should have every luxury given him and the best of everything that the group has to offer. 852 [291]

Older boys show greater emotion and expression of pain than the younger ones when they are operated upon. The younger ones stop crying almost immediately after the operation.

3. The older age grade of youths who have been shown the totemic emblem of the python for the first time (see Section F, 4) are put on a vegetable diet for a period determined by the leader of the ceremony, ordinarily about a week. At the end of the period the young men are taken to the men's ceremonial grounds where they are painted by 852 561 262 302

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The man who is the wife's partner later privately again gives her presents of spears or tobacco, red ocher, and the ordinary presents that are reciprocally exchanged. She accepts the present, keeps part of it, and gives the rest to her husband. The natives, both men and women, are much more interested in the ritual of giving and taking than in the value of the presents, which is never very great. There is usually considerable joking and amusement during this dance. Although intercourse is not to be consummated between the ceremonial partners until the last night of the ceremony, and then only for ceremonial purposes, there are a considerable number of clandestine meetings between these mates before that time. This is recognized by all, even though it is not considered regular or entirely proper.

After a man has had sexual intercourse with another man's wife, the latter male comes to him and puts his sweat on the legs and arms of his wife's partner so that the one who has been with his wife won't be "sick" from it. The position taken in the sexual act differs from the customary one (see page 78) in that the woman sits on the ground on the back of her buttocks. The trunk of the body leans back and at an angle from the legs, with the hands on the ground in back of the body to support it. The man puts his legs under hers and his hands around her so that the pudenda meet in closer contact than if he lay on her.

3. For the final occasion the men and women partners are heavily painted. On this night one woman may have sexual relations with several men because there is always a lack of women in the group attending the ceremony. If a woman shows a dislike for her ceremonial partner and refuses to join him, she is told she will be ill and make her husband and ceremonial mate ill, and she is forced to comply with her husband's demand. If a man refuses, the woman sends word that Muit will make him ill, and that she too will be sick.

Native Interpretation.—The ceremonial exchange of wives and participation in ritual intercourse is thought to be absolutely obligatory on the men and women. When a man or woman objects, the older men insist, as does the partner, that the person must do this or "Muit will make him ill" and the partner will become ill too. In speaking of the ceremonial sexual exchange I was told many times, "This makes everybody clean. It makes everyone's body good until next dry season."

The oldest leader of the Gunabibi in the area, in many ways the man best-informed on this ceremony, said to me, "Those two women [the Wawilak sisters], they walked down from the Wawilak country

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into certain ceremonies such as the Djungguan to regulate the ritual behavior.

The ritual sanction of offending the ancestors and totems by starting a fight prevents many feuds from breaking into open conflict. This sanction or a similar one is absolutely necessary to allow the ritual to remain an interclan and tribal affair. If the sanction and its attendant action were not fully established, the disintegrating effect of the clan solidarities and their associated antagonism to outside groups, organized by the blood feuds, would destroy the participation of a large number of groups and reduce the people who would participate in any one ritual to a residue composed only of clans and peoples closely connected by marriage. At times the blood-feud feeling is so intense that a ceremony is broken up, or the ceremony is not attended by the warring groups.

The rituals provide the only effective mechanisms which enlarge the social horizon of any individual or clan beyond his or its immediate neighbors. The kinship system with its asymmetrical marriage arrangements constantly pushes out into the larger culture and tends to increase the clan's participation in wider groupings; but in the face of the blood feud, organized on the basic unity of the clan and its intermarrying groups, this larger integration of the society on the basis of the kinship alone is impossible. Old rivalries for women are remembered and several generations of killings are not forgotten, which means that even though a man calls a somewhat distant tribesman "older brother" and is termed "younger brother" by him, the concepts of cooperation and solidarity that lie within these terms have no effect in restraining killings or the blood feud, since the feelings of loyalty to the local group and the near kin, as expressed in antagonism to outsiders, prevent an extension of the kinship system to others.

It is the larger rituals, then, with their most powerful religious totemic sanctions which do operate to restrain the local loyalties and seasonally allow a larger participation in the group. In certain instances they further tend to lessen the intensity of the dislikes of the conflicting groups following the dispersion of the larger groups. It must be remembered, however, that the mere bringing together of very large groups, as for example in the Gunabibi (to which people come from great distances), tends to create situations which may lead to battles after the ceremonies are over; but ordinarily a peacemaking duel follows the ceremony which is supposed to settle old fights and lead to a general friendliness.

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Masculinity and Femininity as Organizing Principles of the Social Organization as Expressed in the Rituals

562 182 831 In addition to isolating the symbols of the snake as the rainy season and the snake as the men's age-grading group, we can separate out a further symbol which permeates all their thinking and underlies their elaborate organization and social structure. Masculinity is inextricably interwoven with ritual cleanliness, and femininity is equally entwined with the concept of uncleanliness, the former being the sacred principle and the latter the profane. This sexual dichotomy and its correlation with the Murngin beliefs of what are the sacred and profane elements of the group, are again connected with a further principle of human relations, namely, that of superordination and subordination.

562 182 626 771 The superordinate male group, made sacred through the ritual initiation of its individual members into the sacred group, and maintained as a unit by continual participation in the rituals, subordinates the female group which is unified by virtue of exclusion from the ceremonies and of ritual uncleanliness. The superordination of the male is made a mystery by the nexus of masculinity, sacredness, and the seasonal reproductive cycle. Within this mystery lies one of the strongest and most effective sanctions found in Murngin society. The male sacredness becomes more sacrosanct and "holy" as it progresses into the graded deeper mysteries through the age-graded initiations, and this sacredness controls the profane and less sacred elements of society by the invocation of the direct negative sanctions of ritual: "If you young men do not do this, such and such will happen to you." "This man married wrong or that woman has had illegal sexual relations, and our whole group is endangered [*"made sick"*]." Obviously it behooves everyone to live up to the code of the society; and if he does not, the whole group feels compelled to act to prevent the contagion of his harmful actions causing a general catastrophe. The ceremonial mysteries of the male group, then, help subordinate not only the women and younger boys but also the men themselves, since they too cannot profane the sacred mysteries by some impure and illegal act; if they do, the male group feels obliged to act. In other words, in the local organization of the whole social group from the pinnacle of the old men's age grade to the bottom age grade of women and children, and from the most remote northeastern clan of Wessel Island to the most southeastern one in the far interior, there is a general subordination of the several institutions of the social organization

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to the higher sacred realm which constitutes the Murngin system of totemism. It is in the ultimate sanctions of the totemic system that Murngin society finds its final unity. The general technology, which is the community's practical adaptation to its natural environment, is disciplined and organized through the instrumentation of social organization. For example, the rules of conduct for various kin personalities, such as gawel and waku, or father and son, regulate the distribution and consumption of the social goods produced by the technology; or, to take another example, the rules of clan membership demand certain divisions of foods, other creature necessities, and services. These and the other laws of the social organization not only discipline the economic life but also relate the individual members and the institutions of the community to each other.

The totemic system provides, first, a final set of absolute sanctions for the society which places a pressure on all the members to perform the acts dictated by the rules of the social organization; and, second, a set of concepts organized into a unified system which provides a mechanism for group integration. The totemic emblem is a concrete symbol of these two basic concepts, and an object which can be manipulated by a series of rituals (primarily the Narra), which elaborate, dramatize, and tie together the various sacred concepts of the myths in the sacred dances and songs. The latent content of these rituals is the myth, and within the myth are the fundamental symbols of the social concepts of totemism. These were the symbols which we analyzed and for which we gave the native interpretation in Chapters IX and X and summarized in the beginning of this chapter. In the present chapter we also presented some of the concepts which underlie the oral rite and dramatic ritual. We found that there is a general idea which surrounds natural phenomena, and that nature is seen as a unity, as an alternation of the dry and rainy season (that is, in the myth the seasonal alternation is symbolized by the conflict of the snake and the two women). The natural phenomena are all organized in this dichotomy. We saw that the seasonal variations are given social categories by the identification of the rainy season with the male principle and the dry period with the female principle. This classification is mechanically accomplished in Murngin thinking by giving the seasons and the age-grade dichotomy the same symbols. The relation of the social category to the natural one is implicit in the myth's account of the wronging of the two women by the ancestors of man

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
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Emu. It was because they fought that Jabiru stayed by the sea and Emu went into the bush. 773X

BAMAPAMA, TRICKSTER HERO

Bamapama is the trickster hero of the Murngin. He was a man who lived in the mythological period and committed a great number of asocial acts, most of them incestuous. He is depicted as ever filled with sexual desire and always anxious to satisfy it by attacking the wives of other men, particularly those women who belong to his own moiety. He is a somewhat stupid fellow, rather gay, and is usually attempting some trick by which he can satisfy his inordinate lust. 776 773X

Any attempt to get at a deeper understanding of his place in Murngin culture must consider not only the general content of the stories about him, which follow, but also the effect on the Murngin to whom they are told, the other uses to which the myths are put besides mere story-telling, and at times the reasons why they are told.

The Murngin think of Bamapama as a "crazy man" and one who breaks all tribal laws and cannot be disciplined. A man who is "crazy" and a young man who cannot be disciplined are classed as one and the same. A man of this kind (often called wakinu and "all the same as Bamapama") is usually killed by his own people, or they take him to another country and have some of their enemies kill him. Although an insane person and an asocial person are classed under the same term, there is a distinction made in the behavior of the people toward them, for an insane man is given special treatment and is protected and guarded by all his people. 828 626

The Bamapama stories are correlated with the clan local organization. Some of the themes of this cycle are enacted in ritual (see the Marunga clan garma ceremony, pages 564-565). The Bamapama stories, as well as the mother-in-law story (see page 562) function as negative sanctions in the enforcement of clan and moiety laws surrounding sexual discipline, particularly that of incest. The stories always elicit gales of laughter and make the trickster a figure of derision; at the same time he is liked as an amusing fellow. He has something of the fascination of the devil in our own society, although it must be clearly understood that the native trickster is not morally as well developed as is our own trickster. Bamapama is a symbol of asocial behavior since he not only breaks the laws of exogamy but acts "like a crazy fellow." When he eats charcoal and "runs around like a dog," when he fights with dogs instead of human beings, the laughter in a group of listeners aroused by his escapades seems to act as a release for the repression of asocial desires in the minds of the people. The Bamapama stories constrain the individual from committing similar acts by his consciousness of the group's disapproval of such behavior and by a disapproval of himself should he even conceive of himself in a similar situation. 773X 776 182 626 522

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626 182 776 522 Ridicule and laughter are two strong sanctions for the enforcement of discipline in Murngin society. The speaker is usually, but not always, an older man who knows the stories, and the audience is composed ordinarily of younger men. The actions of Bamapama are always asocial. The laughter at his actions seems to serve two purposes. In the first place, it holds such actions as his up to ridicule and scorn and identifies anyone who does such things as being in the same category and worthy of the same scornful laughter; at the same time the various social pressures which are bearing against the individuals of the community to force their obedience to the restricted sexual codes are vicariously evaded and the deeper asocial yearnings expressed by the enjoyment of Bamapama's exploits. It seems possible that Bamapama, the trickster hero, is a creation of the vicarious satisfaction of the Murngin males' inhibited incestuous desires and further serves a positively useful function in bringing ridicule on these same collective individual desires and preventing their direct satisfaction. It can easily be seen that the women also appreciate these stories and likewise derive a vicarious satisfaction out of listening to them.

776 Bamapama is present in the various areas under a number of names, but under all of them he is recognized as Bamapama himself. He was supposed to have lived in the pre-human period, although some of the stories are told about his actions in relation to modern clanspeople.

BAMAPAMA AND GURRONG

X113 That very crazy fellow's name is Bamapama. He is a true bushman. It was in the days of Wongar, in the country of the Burilung clan. All the young girls of the people were sitting down in a line. This man Bamapama went over where they were and looked at them. He looked and looked at these girls. He called them Gurrong. They called him Marelker.

He said to these girls, "You run along here. I want to look at you." They ran and ran, and then came back. He made each one of them jump over a stick as she ran. He wanted the girls to jump over this stick to see how they would look, for there were too many of them together to tell what each looked like. As each one jumped over he said, "That's no good."

The girls were young and had firm, well-developed breasts. As each jumped over it he scratched his head. Finally he asked them all to run once more, so that he could look at them again.

There was one girl he liked the most. He selected her from the rest and rubbed her back and breasts with his hands. He said to her, "Gurrong, I want you to come with me to this pool where we will catch some fish." He said, "You go ahead and I'll come behind."

He was lying to her. He came by a tree, the bark of which is used to poison fish, and scratched off some of the bark. He put it in the water and poisoned the fish. The fish died and came to the top of the water. Bamapama and his gurrong caught several of them. They put them on the bank

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943)1949
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tensity of their relationship, gauged by the degree of totemic inheritance. But these groups are certainly not tribes.[9]

The clan, or in practice its occupational group, the horde (*vide infra* p. 12), is the most important unit of social life in Arnhem Land. The clan is the territorial or land-owning group, but the horde is the war-making group, and each horde is to a large extent independent and self-governing. Anything approaching kingship or chieftainship is unknown in Arnhem Land. Law, order and discipline is laid down by tradition. It is defined in the mythology, and in the sagas of the culture heroes, and is maintained by public opinion, enforced by the old men, who act as custodians of the heritage of the clan. The authority of the old men is backed, in turn, by the *wänjärr*, the totemic ancestors themselves, whose edicts are enforced by the threat of supernatural sanctions.

There is no individual ownership of land. Land ownership is vested in the clan as the hereditary group, and as this is a *patrilineal*[10] society, a man is born into his father's clan and has hunting rights over the territory of his own clan and generally over that of several others, particularly that

[9] The arbitrary use of the term *Murngin*, "tribe", for the people of Eastern Arnhem Land, which was introduced by Professor W. Lloyd Warner (*A Black Civilisation*; New York and London, 1937) is particularly unfortunate, for as was pointed out (footnote 5) east of Cape Stewart in North Central Arnhem Land tribal organisation is conspicuous by its absence from the intricate social organisation of the area, although it appears again at Groote Eylandt in the Gulf of Carpentaria, and occurs along the Roper River. The word *murngin* has nothing to do with social organisation, and is in no sense the name of a "tribe".

[10] Descent, among the aborigines, in family, clan and certain other hereditary groups, is reckoned either in the male line, i.e. through the father, in which case it is called *patrilineal*, or through the mother, when it is called *matrilineal*.

182 a man's or woman's own horde with whom he or she comes
431 into daily contact. They extend also to members of
461 other hordes and are emphasised strongly on occasions
602 when people from distant groups to whom the kinship
[574] organisation is extended, come as visitors. For a young man, such obligations are intense, and to discharge them he is obliged to keep up an almost continuous stream of presents, which entails constant work.

182 With each successive stage of initiation it is obligatory
431 for him to make gifts to the old men of the clan group into
461 which he is being initiated. This may become very irksome
626 and may even reach a stage when no matter how hard he
561 works he is unable completely to discharge all his obligations, so laying himself open to the fear of reprisals, such as
[754] visitation by *kälka* (sorcerers who kill by the use of magic) or by other agencies. Fear of the use of secret methods of reprisal is a very real one, and provides, for a man, one of the strongest inducements to work, to keep pace with his obligations, and so to give no cause for resentment.

431 In those ceremonies such as the *kunabibbi* and *ŋulmark*
561 which transcend clan and tribal boundaries, and are not
796 restricted to, or regarded as the proprietary right of, a
614 small group such as a clan, but are practised widely throughout the territory, these obligations are less onerous. In
778 others, of the type called *märdai'in*, the initiation ceremonies carried out by each clan or group of clans sharing the same totems, at which its sacred totems are revealed, the burden of the gifts or payments is a heavy one. The internal solidarity of these small groups is intense, and their *märdai'in* or *räŋga*—the secret name for the objects which represent the *mälli*, the "shade" or "spirit" of the totemic ancestors themselves—are jealously guarded. These *räŋga* are very sacred and are regarded as dangerous to the

431 554 [777] [796] which are stripped from the *räŋga* and presented to special individuals after the conclusion of the ceremony, and which carry *marr*, confer prestige on the recipient and bring him "good luck" (*tjämbait*) in hunting.

431 554 626 182 461 But in any case, failure to discharge the obligations which he incurs at these times would be unthinkable, for a man believes that he is in a state of danger from *marr* (*mana*), and that ritual visitation will follow if he does not propitiate the group concerned. On this account, and because he would suffer in prestige by failure to discharge these obligations, they are not incurred lightly. This was brought home to me vividly in Arnhem Land when Raiwälla of Mildjiŋi clan, a man who was with me for years, and who accompanied me everywhere, asked me not to take him with me when I was invited to *ŋarra* (*märdai'in*) ceremonies. He explained, in some distress, that because of his association with me, he had been invited to attend many more *ŋarra* than would normally have been the case and was incurring thereby obligations to make *tadoit* payments (page 40) of food and *gerri* (material wealth) which he would not be able to discharge. Although the people knew that he was far from his own territory and understood his position, and although they assured him that he need not make any return presentations, he would not accept this. If he had done so he would not only have been in danger from *marr*, which had not been returned with the ceremonial presentation food or *gerri*, but he would have lost face and been placed in a position of inferiority. The urge, the "drive", furnished by these psychological attitudes in a fully organised aboriginal society are more forceful than any material urge. They far outweigh any desire to gain possessions and are the most important motive forces behind much of the hunting, and the organised and sustained work

182 431 554 461

which goes on. But while these obligations impose a heavy burden, especially upon a young man who must attend a long series of ceremonies with a vista of payments to be met, the ceremonies in turn confer some benefit upon him, although this may be indirect. They carry increased social status and prestige which in turn bring gradual liberation from some of the irksome tabus which influence almost every act of a young man.

Although on these occasions the immediate burden of gathering vegetable food falls on his female relatives, especially upon his mother and sisters, this does not relieve the initiate of his own personal obligations, but rather intensifies them. He must now redouble his efforts in hunting to enable him in turn to supply his women relations with fish, kangaroo, "sugar bag" or wild honey, in order to retain their goodwill. A man's success as a hunter depends not only on his ability to stalk and his skill with the spear but also on his capacity to make, and to maintain in serviceable condition, his hunting weapons, his fishing lines and nets and sometimes also a canoe. So initiation, especially initiation into the jealously-guarded clan totems (*märdai'in*) of the small groups which characterise the social organisation of North-eastern Arnhem Land, with their intense solidarity and quick resentment,[10] sets up a long train of social obligations—each with a definite economic import—each requiring gift and counter gift, and furnishing the motive for work, the urge for production both of food and *gerri*.

[10] Just as generous presentations of *gerri* (material wealth) and *ŋäta* (food) promote goodwill, so tardiness in the discharge of these obligations may lead to avenging expeditions and interclan feuds. A man who is unpopular, or who is notorious for his carelessness in these matters is more likely to be named as the victim when a scapegoat is sought to avenge a death or wrong.

in-law), and with the particular *kauwäl* (mother's brother) who is the husband of this woman to whom he applies the term *mukul*. Before the potential mother-in-law has a daughter, even before she is pregnant, he may begin to send her gifts of food. These progressive gifts have a cumulative effect and build up goodwill. They are divided into two series, to each of which a special name is applied. The first series are *milmarr*, while those given to the mother-in-law after the birth of a daughter are known by a different term, *mundur*. As my informant said, "that is hard work for me; she pays me back," i.e. by giving her daughter to me in marriage. They believe that this special form of giving has more than a "goodwill" effect, and that *marr*, the spiritual force or power to which I have referred, goes with the food, so that it has a greater significance than the white man would attach to it—and much greater than its mere value as food. The same applies to the special ceremonial gifts of food and *gerri* which are presented by the novitiate at various stages during his initiation to clan totems and to other cults. Implicit in this form of giving is the feeling which is even more important than "goodwill", that it places the recipient under an obligation to repay. To remain under such a debt is to accept a feeling of inferiority, of shame and humiliation.

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In discussing the "drive", the urge to carry out the exacting hard work (which in a fully organised aboriginal society is everywhere in evidence) I have stressed the obligation which a man feels to reciprocate with a gift of at

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toward *mukul rumaro* is one of rigid avoidance. He may not speak to her nor she to him, but he has very definite obligations towards her (*mukul rumaro*), including the obligation to provide her with certain animal food, with progressive gifts of a special type described above.

182 431 461 554 626 least equal, or if possible greater value, in order to maintain his social status and to enhance his prestige. He achieves this by his capacity to reciprocate a gift quickly and generously. If he failed to meet the obligations imposed, for example by the kinship pattern, he would lose face, prestige, in his group. It will be evident that this feeling of shame and humiliation at failure to reciprocate a gift or to honour an obligation, apart altogether from any danger of incurring resentment and visitation by evil magic, furnishes one of the most powerful mechanisms which underlie the production of food and goods, and the circulation of these. This is well shown by an example given to me by my informants, which illustrates the use which can be made of this fact 262 562 784 to gain a desired objective. While a boy is still regarded as a child, there is no tabu even for his sisters upon eating the food that he may capture. But immediately after the circumcision ceremony, when his social status is altered and he lives apart from his mother and father in the single men's camp, the food collected or killed by a boy becomes tabu to relations of certain orders, and is now known by a special name, *kälŋboi* (*vide* page 21).

262 431 784 606 584 The eating of all *kälŋboi* food is surrounded by tabus, even for those relatives who are permitted to partake of it at all. For "outside" or "distant" relatives under the kinship system to eat this *kälŋboi* food is a special privilege, but the obligation to make ceremonial return payments, again of the type called *tadoit*, is always present. *Kälŋboi* food may sometimes be used to ingratiate a young man with a woman who stands in the relationship of potential mother-in-law (*mukul rumaro*) to him, but whose daughter has already been promised (*wawun*) to another man some distance away. At first the *mukul rumaro* may refuse the *kälŋboi* food, but under coercion she may at length accept it, and

informant explains this feeling, and contrasts the spirit in which such a gift is given, in these circumstances, with one which is given merely in response to a request. He conceives his giving within the ceremonial cycle—which is of the type called *wetj*—as due to *marr*, to the force, the ritual urge, (stronger, even, than the desire to retain and possess *gerri*) to pass them on and either to increase thereby his own prestige in the *kumur märndä* relationship, or to acquit himself of an existing obligation in the quarter to which he sends it.

Again the same informant, Raiwälla of Mildjiŋi clan on the Lower Glyde River, a fine and intelligent native, with a great number of partners in this ceremonial exchange system, widely dispersed throughout Central Arnhem Land, said of his two younger half-brothers (from the same mother) who belonged to Ritar'ŋo clan and who were *kumur djalk* to him: "Wuruwul and ŋälländir (his half-brothers) bring *ŋämbi djalk . . . must* I give *wetj*." i.e. "They bring stone spear heads" (from ŋillipidji the appropriate *kumur* in the exchange cycle) "and I *must* reciprocate."

To fail to repay these gifts quickly, even with his own half-brothers, would be to lose face, to suffer in prestige—perhaps even to be passed over next time a gift in the ceremonial exchange system was available. Some idea of the importance of the smooth operation of the ceremonial exchange cycle, and of the extent to which it induces a state of *euphoria* or ritual well-being, may be gathered from the answer which I received from this same informant (Raiwälla) to a question which I had put to him.

When Raiwälla listed *bäti mindjalpi* (a special type of woven basket carried by men to contain their personal possessions) among the *gerri* which he received from *kumur*

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159 to feed her [give her to him]"; but if he is a greedy fellow he says, "No, I
584 want to keep her myself."

159 The black man's custom is different from the way white men are. A
[582] black man takes a wife when she is very young, sometimes before her
593 breasts have come. He sleeps with her, loves her, and does everything but
[826] have intercourse with her. This makes his girl want him and makes her breasts come large and start sticking out. That is before her blood comes.
[841] When blood first comes to a woman it is after she has copulated with a man for the first time. That is what causes it. She has blood a few more times, and then she has a baby, and then the blood stops.

159 If my wife gave me no children, I would go to my gawel and tell him. He
587 would say, "Wait a little while and I will give you another daughter of mine
595 so that you can have children." If my wife died, my father-in-law would give me another one right away. If he hasn't a grown daughter, he would wait until his little one got larger and then he would give that girl to me.

159 When my second wife got large enough her father and mother brought
595 her to me and said for her to stay with me and that I was her husband (pages 95-96). My first wife [the new wife's older sister] did not growl at me but kept very quiet when I was around. When I was away she growled at her little sister and told her to go on away. "Mahkarolla belongs to me and not to you." By and by my new wife told me about this. She also told her mother and father.

[626] They said to my first wife, "You must stop this quarreling with your sister. She is just the same as you. You are our daughter and she is our daughter. You have Mahkarolla for a husband, and we have given her to him and she has him for a husband. She is your young sister. You will now have someone to look out for the wood for you, and she can help you get food for your husband."

My wife kept quiet then. Those two sisters live together just like good friends. They never fight like the wives of some husbands do. They look out for each other's children.

159 When another gawel liked me he went to my proper father-in-law and
584 said, "I like that son-in-law that belongs to you. I would like to give him my daughter. He can be a son-in-law of mine, too." My gawel, because he is a good man, said, "You haven't promised that girl of yours to somebody else, have you?" If that man had said, "Yes," mine would have said, "No, you can't because that will make trouble for my son-in-law." That man said, "No," so my father-in-law said, "Yes."

159 My mother-in-law—I don't talk to her. I can't go close to her camp, can't
606 go pick up something close to her camp, can't take food from her. I can't give food to her straight; I must give it through my wife. When I am

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159 787 842 I said, "Your mother is here alongside of me." Her mother had not had children yet. We had no family. She was only a young girl. I awakened my wife and told her my dream, for I thought straightaway, "I am going to have a daughter." I said to her, "I dreamed a girl for you." My wife knew then she was going to have a daughter.

After my daughter was born we knew we were going to have a son because I dreamed a son. One moon went by. My wife felt a little bit heavy. She told me. I said, "Yes, that is what I told you before in the dream." A few months later a son was born.

159 593 626 855 I like my children. If a father and mother do not take care of their sons and daughters all the women everywhere start gossiping about them. They say that they are crazy, that maybe they have an evil spirit in their heads, and they say they are no good. We men talk the same way, too. We do not like to see little children mistreated. My little son is just the same as my spear-thrower. He is just the same as my right arm (page 71). I think it is a good thing for a man to have a lot of children. It makes a lot of people in his tribe. It always gives him, when he gets old, all the things he wants to eat and use for himself. If he has trouble, and all men have trouble, he does not have to go to his mother's people or his wife's people for help. He has it himself. He can take his own sons and fight any people because he is strong. When a man has no sons and no daughters, then when he gets old he can do nothing. We black men like daughters too because when they marry that gives us many wakus and makes us very strong. Good sons-in-law always make many gifts. Good wakus make men proud. We like sons too because nobody can hurt us.

159 582 Sometimes people talk out loud in the camp at night, and they say, "Which one did you promise this daughter of yours to?"

I say, "I don't know." I say, "No one." I say, "If I have a sister and she has a son I can't wait any longer then. I must point at that waku [sister's son and son-in-law]. He must get her. But now I must keep quiet. I can't say anything. My sister has no son and I must wait. My little boy's mother has a brother; by and by when he has a daughter, I must go to him and get that girl for my son. That will make everything right and keep our family straight" (pages 65-67).

Mainkarolla as a Friend and a Murngin

000 Those who believe that the savage has a prerational mentality have not known natives intimately, either because of not being in contact with them or because of the mental barrier of scientific or religious dogma. The larger ideas and more general concepts of primitive people are much the same as our own. They have their philosophers and thinkers, their fools and their